

To: Members of the House Committee on Great Lakes and the Environment
From: Jackie Igafo-Te'o, Jackson, Michigan
Re: Statement in Support of the Safe Children's Products Act, HB 4763-69
Date: April 22, 2009

I appreciate this opportunity to submit written testimony on the Safe Children's Products Act.

As a mother of three, I am constantly concerned with the things that my children come into contact with – whether at home, at school, or in the community. We live in an older home, built in 1938. I am certain that there are toxins in my own home that endanger my children – but I simply can't pack up and move them elsewhere. This is our home.

My middle son has Autism, Asthma, and Bipolar Disorder. We don't know what caused him to have these problems. This is something that we didn't choose and can't necessarily control – and come to think of it, there are a lot of things that we can't control when it comes to our children. But there is one thing that parents *should* be able to have control over – and that is what our children are exposed to while using the toys and products that we put into their hands. Our children trust us to keep them safe.

There should be complete transparency with regard to the chemicals used to formulate the products that we buy for our children. It should be a parent's fundamental right to know what they're paying for...and, what their children are putting into their hands, on their heads, and in their mouths. We should have the opportunity to know what we're buying *before* we buy it – not regrettably afterwards due to an unfortunate government recall.

We're not asking for a mass ban of chemicals. We're simply asking for the right to know what we're buying before we buy it. It's that simple.

Now, I surely can't make my son's disabilities disappear – this isn't about that – but I have the right and responsibility to do everything I can to limit his exposure to harmful toxins and chemicals from this point forward. He could well be more vulnerable to their effects than most children.

Protecting our children by knowing what we're exposing them to should be the right of all parents. We are looking to you to pass legislation as soon as possible to allow this to happen. Thank you.